

National Predictive Services Group Charter

I. Background

The National Fire Plan provided for the development of Predictive Service Units at the GACCs and the NICC in order to integrate climate, weather, situation, resource status and fuels information into products that will enhance the ability of managers to make sound decisions for both short and long range strategy development and resource allocation decisions, and ensure the safety of firefighting and emergency personnel. The concept behind this effort was to blend the functions of intelligence, meteorological forecasting and other analyst capabilities into one cohesive group called “Predictive Services” in order to place a new emphasis on predictive capability at the Geographic Area and National levels.

On January 18, 2002, the National Multi-Agency Coordination Group (NMAC) chartered the National Predictive Services Group (NPSG) to develop a framework for Predictive Services. NPSG was subsequently re-chartered under the Geographic Area and National Interagency Coordination Center Managers on December 11, 2002. The charter was reviewed and updated on January 19, 2005.

The goal of NPSG is to promote safe, efficient and cost effective fire management practices. Through collaborative leadership, with input from user groups at all levels, the Group strives to continually improve the quality, accuracy, and relevance of decision support products provided through the multi-agency coordination system to fire managers and users nationwide.

II. Name

The National Predictive Services Group hereinafter referred to as the Group.

III. Authority

The Group is under the direction of the Geographic Area and National Interagency Coordination Center Managers.

IV. Purpose

This Group provides a forum for the discussion, coordination and resolution of Predictive Services issues at the national level. The Group is established to help identify user requirements and develop opportunities for improving current processes for gathering, using and disseminating climate, weather, fuels, situation and resource status information, and to advance intelligence and predictive capability for safe, efficient resource prioritization and utilization. The Group will also standardize products where possible, develop and task out action items as needed.

Objectives of the Group are:

- Provide a communication linkage among key users throughout the wildland fire community of predictive service products and research.
- Provide an interagency forum to manage, develop, address and make recommendations for innovations, enhancements, training, standards and timelines of predictive service products and services.
- Serve as an advocate for initiatives coming forward from the field or subordinate working groups for interagency management support and implementation.
- Provide coordinated programmatic leadership as directed by the Geographic Area Center Managers for the Predictive Service community (including intelligence officers, meteorologists, coordinators and analysts) on issues such as research needs, information flow and access, product guidelines and standardization, problem identification, and issue resolution.
- Develop a framework for using climate, weather, situation, resource status, and fuels information to provide decision support tools, which will allow all levels of the multi-agency coordination system to allocate resources in support of wildland fire management operations. This framework will contain, but not be limited to the following:
 - a. Assess customer needs and requirements.
 - b. Standardize products to meet local, geographic and national needs.
 - c. Develop standards for predictive service products spanning short (1-10 day) and long (30-90 day) time periods.

V. Membership

The members of this Group shall consist of nine (9) members plus two advisors. Members will serve a minimum of two years. Members representing specific groups will be replaced at the request of that group (i.e. NASF, Center Managers, Meteorologist and Intelligence groups, NWS, and NMAC) or when no longer able to serve as a member to NPSG. The Field Level Representative candidates will be solicited from outside subject matter experts and candidates will be interviewed for selection by executive committee. Other subject matter experts may be contacted to assist the group as needed. The Group will elect the Chair and Vice-Chair from the members listed below.

Membership will include the following:

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| Member | Geographic Area Center Manager |
| Member | Meteorologist Working Group Representative |
| Member | Intelligence Working Group Representative |
| Member | National Fire Weather Program Manager |
| Member | NICC Intelligence Coordinator |
| Member | NICC Fire Analyst |
| Member | State/NASF Representative |
| Member | Field Level Representative |
| Member | National Weather Service Representative |
| Advisor | NMAC Liaison |
| Advisor | NICC Manager |

VI. Organization

Group leadership will consist of a two-person executive committee, including a Chair and Vice-Chair/Secretary elected by the members. The Group Chair will serve for a two (2) year period. At the expiration of the Chair's term or if the Chair position becomes vacant, the Vice-Chair will assume the Chair position and the members will elect a new Vice-Chair. The retiring Chair may assume member status.

Two sub-groups also operate under the direction of the Group. They are the Intelligence Working Group and the Meteorologist Working Group. Each of these groups is represented by their respective chairs and has developed an operating plan that outlines their protocols for duties, tasks, conference calls, and meetings.

VII. Cooperation and Coordination

Group activities and recommendations will be coordinated with geographic area representatives, other government agencies, appropriate NWCG working teams, universities and research facilities as needed to ensure there is a cohesive effort and a unified outcome.

VIII. Meetings

Regular meetings will be held approximately every three to four months at a time and place determined by the members at the preceding meeting. When appropriate, conference calls may be used in lieu of meetings to minimize travel expenditures.

An agenda will be distributed to all Group members two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Minutes of the meetings will be kept and distributed to the Group members within a two-week period after the meeting.

Travel expenses are the responsibility of the Group members. Cost of meeting facilities may need to be arranged and approved by the Group Chair.

IX. Responsibilities

Executive Committee

- Draft program of work for the Group and any budget requests for approval
- Sets agenda for regularly scheduled meetings
- Submits an annual project status and accomplishments report to the Geographic Area Center Managers at the annual Center Managers' Meeting.

Chair:

- Represents the Group in presenting recommendations to the Geographic Area Center Managers.
- Serves as the Group spokesperson when it is deemed appropriate - especially with outside individuals or groups.
- Presides over the meetings.
- Recommends the need for further resources and authority when it becomes evident.
- Assigns work for special projects or assignments.
- Selects ad hoc subject matter experts to assist in issue resolution.
- Prepares and signs correspondence approved by the members.

Vice-Chair/Secretary:

- Is responsible for the tracking of all on-going projects and the development and implementation of Group procedures.
- Provides follow-up on projects assigned to members and/or working groups to ensure timely completion.
- Documents all meeting agreements in the form of minutes or delegates this function.
- Maintains a permanent file of Group activities.
- Sends meeting announcements, agenda items, etc., to Group members and others as needed.

Members, Advisors and Subject Matter Experts:

- Solicit issues or agenda items from the constituents they represent for inclusion in the Group meeting agendas.
- Attend all regularly scheduled meetings.
- Provide copies of any briefing papers concerning issues to everyone in attendance at the meetings.
- Report team activities and developments to constituents.

X. Charter Amendments

The members of the Group will review proposed changes to this Charter. They will determine if the changes are appropriate and necessary. If so, a revised draft Charter will be developed for concurrence and recommended to the Geographic Area Center Managers for approval. All amendments to this Charter will be kept in a permanent file and previous Charters will be maintained for reference purposes. This Charter will be reviewed in December 2004, then every 3 years thereafter at a minimum.

XI. Charter Approval

This Charter is effective as of the date of approving signature by the NICC Manager, who represents the Geographic Area Center Managers.

 /s/ *Kim Christensen*
National Interagency Coordination Center Manager

January 19, 2005
Date